

Fairfield County Medical Association

Physicians Dedicated to a Healthier Fairfield County

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Memorandum of Support

Fairfield County Medical Association Testimony on

H.B. 6238

An Act Concerning Continuing Medical Education Courses for Physicians

Public Health Committee

February 27, 2013

Senator Gerrantano, Representative Johnson and distinguished members of the Public Health Committee, my name is Mark Thompson and I am the executive director of the Fairfield County Medical Association. On behalf of our 1500 plus physician members, thank you for the opportunity to present this testimony on House Bill 6238: An Act Concerning Continuing Medical Education Courses for Physicians.

Effective October 1, 2005, the Connecticut General Statute 20-10b was adopted to require a licensed physician to earn a minimum of fifty (50) contact hours of qualifying continuing medical education every two years, starting on the first date of license renewal on or after October 1, 2007.

The statute requires that continuing medical education shall be in the area of the physician's practice, reflect the professional needs of the physician in order to meet the health care needs of the public, and include at least one contact hour of training in each of the following areas: A) infectious disease, including but not limited to AIDS and HIV, B) risk management, C) sexual assault, D) domestic violence, and after October 1, 2010, E) cultural competency.

While most physicians would not argue these topics are important, depending on one's medical specialty, many of these topics are not CMEs that relate to the area of the physician's practice, nor do they necessarily reflect the professional needs of the doctor. Case in point, a psychiatrist does not treat infectious disease, a pathologist will not encounter domestic violence, and sexual assault is not something that an anesthesiologist would see or treat.

Even if these five mandated topics were relevant to one's area of medical practice, the law requires the same five mandated topics be repeated every two years. This, too, makes little sense when few changes occur from year to year in the mandated subject areas; and it is akin to asking everyone to retake algebra every two years. Physicians are smart people and there is no need to make them repeat the same subject material. Physicians would much rather spend the five hours of time and the financial resources for those five mandated hours on CME that is germane to their professional needs.

To be clear, the physicians of Fairfield County do not oppose the fifty (50) hours of continuing medical education. They do, however, support the initial one-time requirement for taking the five mandated topics. What the physicians ask is to be relieved of the necessity to retake the same five mandated topics every two years. Once the physician gets the checkmark in the box they should no longer be required to repeat any of the mandated topics. This is not to say, however, that physicians could repeat any of the five topics should they believe it is relevant to their medical practice.

Thank you for the opportunity to present and I welcome any questions or comments.